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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

Lying-in and *Inoculation*

CHARITY,

OF THE

CITY OF DUBLIN.

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BY A

FRIEND TO THE PUBLIC.

DUBLIN:

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

LYING-IN AND INOCULATION CHARITY, &c.

THE design of this Charity is to give relief to poor married Women in Labour, by delivering them at their own Habitations; and to prevent the malignant and fatal effects of that destructive disease the Small-pox, by the gentle and salutary means of Inoculation.

For

For theſe uſeful purpoſes, a ſociety is formed of perſons, who meet at ſtated times, in order to examine the accounts, and direct the buſineſs of the Charity; and each of whom ſubſcribing half a Guinea or upwards *per ann.* is a Member for one Year; or paying five Guineas or upwards at one payment, is a Member for Life; and may recommend in each Year for every half Guinea ſo ſubſcribed, or five Guineas ſo paid, poor married Women, to be delivered at their own Habitations, or poor Perſons, to be inoculated for the Small-pox *.

Dr. Emmet, State-Phyſician, and Dr. Foster, one of the Phyſicians of the Houſe of Induſtry, in *Channel-Row*, and Mr. Henthorn, one of the Surgeons of that Houſe, execute the medical buſineſs in the following Manner, viz. Dr. Foster, as Phyſician and Accoucheur, or Man-Midwife and Inſtructor

* Vide, Rule XII.

ſtructor of the (*a*) Midwives employed by the Society; Mr. HENTHORN, as Surgeon; and Dr. EMMET, as conſulting Phyſician.

THESE are the out-lines of this humane undertaking; and it is obſervable that the method, in which aſſiſtance is given to the objects of it, is cheap, diffuſive, and beneficial. But perhaps ſome people will think that it is unneceſſary to provide further relief of any kind for the objects of one branch of it; there being an ample and ſufficient proviſion for them at the Lying-in Hoſpital, where they not only find eaſy admittance, religious conſolation, and the beſt medical aſſiſtance, but are moreover regularly

(*a*) In an Account of the Lying-in Charity for delivering poor married Women at their own Habitations, inſtituted in the City of London, in the Year 1757, it is juſtly obſerved that the Deſign would, INCIDENTALLY, be productive of general Good, by increaſing the number of ſkilful and honeſt Midwives; who, inſtructed in their art at the charge of the Charity, and placed in various parts of the town, would be ready to adminiſter their aid to any perſons that might want it.

regularly ſupplied with proper food, and duly attended by experienced nurſes.

In order to prevent miſtakes, and to be able to form a true and juſt opinion in a matter of ſuch general concernment, it is requiſite to conſider minutely the ſeveral gradations of poverty and diſtreſs, the actual wants, and natural deſires of the poor in their various ſituations, and the preciſe degree of aſſiſtance, which each of theſe charities affords.

If a poor Woman with Child be under a neceſſity of quitting her ſervice in order to lye-in, or if ſhe be a lodger in one room (which is frequently the caſe in this populous City) in common with ſeveral other poor perſons of both ſexes, who muſt either ſtarve or work the whole day at ſome noiſy employment; in ſuch caſes ſhe will naturally deſire to be taken into the Hoſpital, and will without doubt think herſelf extremely happy in being reſcued from diſturbance, foul air, and many other inconveniencies,

which

which are too obvious, and too delicate to be mentioned.

But where a poor Woman, with Child, has a private and commodious apartment, (*b*) and is Mother, perhaps, of Children,

(*b*) The Circumſtance of relieving the Women at their own Habitations has a ſtriking propriety in it.

Whatever ſentiments ſome perſons are induced to entertain of poor married people; many of them have as ſtrong attachments to each other, as thoſe who have been educated in higher life, and with greater advantages: they will do as much, ſuffer as much, and deny themſelves as much for each other, as people of ſuperior condition. This is undoubtedly true with reſpect to many a poor couple. And how grievous will a ſeparation be to ſuch perſons? forced by extreme want to ſubmit to it, that the wife may have the aſſiſtance of an Hoſpital in her Lying-in, with what regret will they be divided? what heart-rending anguiſh will overwhelm them when they are taking a ſolemn, and perhaps a laſt farewell of each other? Let any affectionate pair, of whatſoever rank or condition, ſay, whether they would not think, if the caſe was their own, ſuch ſeparation moſt painful and afflictive, and be induced to undergo almoſt any inconvenience, rather than conſent to it. And ſuch has actually been the reſolution of many poor Women: they have refuſed the ſuccour of an Hoſpital upon account of this inſupportable ſeparation: they have choſe rather to incur any expence, endure any hardſhips, run any riſks of life and health, than at ſo alarming a time, be torn from their huſbands and homes. And though the pleas of affection are in many inſtances over-ruled by the ſtronger pleas of neceſſity

Children, who require her conſtant and immediate direction, and Wife of a faithful

neceſſity, and, in conſequence, a ſeparation is complied with; yet the anxiety uſually ſuffered, both by the Huſband and Wife, in ſuch caſes, is ſo great, as of itſelf to create an inſurmountable objection to this method of relief.

The Wife being a Mother, the Impropriety of removing her to an Hoſpital is ſtill more apparent. Not to inſiſt on the ſorrow which a tender Mother will feel upon being taken from her little ones, at a time when her ſpirits are low, her Health impaired, and her Heart more ſtrongly attached to her domeſtic connexions, than at any other; what muſt be the conſequence of it with reſpect to the Children? While the Wife continues at home, the Huſband may purſue his buſineſs abroad. Her preſence, with all the diſadvantages of her ſituation, will yet be of very beneficial influence to her family. Though able to do little or nothing herſelf, ſhe may give directions to a child or a nurſe concerning the moſt material affairs: She may be up, and able to do many things for her Children, long before the cuſtomary time of diſcharging women from the Lying-in Hoſpitals. No one need be reminded of the importance of a Mother's reſidence in a poor man's family, with regard to the ſafety, cleanlineſs, behaviour, and happineſs of the children. If ſhe be removed, the Huſband muſt forego the profits of his conſtant labour to ſupply her place at home; or if extreme penury makes that impracticable, he muſt be at the charge of hiring ſome perſon to look after his deſerted children; or, his circumſtances not allowing him to do even that, the helpleſs infants muſt be left for the moſt part intirely to themſelves.

There is one thing more not to be omitted in this place. By delivering women at their own houſes, the mutual regard of Huſband

faithful and loving Huſband, who chearfully co-operates with her in aiming at that laudable degree of independance, with which, even in the lower claſſes of life, the induſtrious purſuit of an honeſt calling is uſually bleſſed: Is it reaſonable to think that a Woman ſo circumſtanced, if at the approach of labour ſhe be driven by an occaſional failure of trade, or dearneſs of proviſions to look abroad for relief, can without inexpreſſible anguiſh and reluctance, depart from her own Habitation? or is it to be imagined but that ſhe will

Huſband and Wife is better conſulted, than by any method which requires a ſeparation. To perſons cloſely connected by the ties of habit, affection, and intereſt, Intervals of danger to either party are found to ſupport and ſtrengthen reciprocal love. They improve the tender paſſions, give them room to exert and diſplay themſelves more freely, than they are wont to do in ſeaſons of ſecurity and more general intercourſe. The bleſſings of the matrimonial union will be more ſenſibly felt under the quick and fearful apprehenſion of its diſſolution: The eſteem and kindneſs, which before ſeemed to be languid and expiring, then revives and kindles afreſh with all the warmth and ſtrength of the moſt paſſionate endearment. It is therefore another objection to the mode of relief by Hoſpitals, that the ſeparation of Huſband and Wife intercepts theſe fair occaſions of teſtifying and confirming their mutual affection.

Vid. Account of the Lying-in Charity, London.

will even ſolicit the leſs degree of aſſiſtance afforded by this charity, in preference to a much greater, which if ſhe were otherwiſe ſituated, ſhe might be equally glad to receive at the Hoſpital. (*c*)

A FEW ſuch inſtances may ſerve to ſhew that neither of theſe charities is unneceſſary; but that, being deſigned for objects differently ſituated and circumſtanced, the one may, in a multitude of caſes, be of ſignal ſervice, where in compariſon the other is of little or none; and that, while each ſup-

(*c*) It cannot be denied, but that the proviſion, which is hereby made for *Emergencies*, is very valuable; and in ordinary caſes, the relief is of conſiderable ſervice. Men of very low condition can hardly purchaſe the neceſſaries of life; and if they have a Family of Children, or a ſickly Wife, it will be found very difficult for *them* (who, beſides, are very rarely patterns of œconomy) to defray the Charges of a common Lying-in: Thoſe who are moſt experienced in this matter, well know the hardſhips Women undergo; the long, dangerous, and, frequently fatal illneſſes they contract from the want of able Midwives and proper Medicines. So trifling as ſome may think the help afforded by this charity, the pains with which the poor ſolicit it, the joy they diſcover upon receiving it, and the gratitude they demonſtrate afterwards, are inconteſtable proofs of the value *they* ſet upon it; and they ſhould be no incompetent judges of its merit.

Vid. Account of the Lying-in Charity, London.

plies the defects of the other, by allowing for the natural feelings, complying with the reasonable desires, and proportioning the degree of assistance to the real wants, of the objects, they both together constitute a comprehensive and perfect scheme, for the relief of poor Women in the most distressful and dangerous situation of human life.

As the objects of the Lying-in Hospital, and those of that part of this charity, which is designed for the relief of Women in Labour, differ from one another in several respects, so do the means by which they are supported. The fund of the Hospital, except what arises from the seats of the chapel, with a few benefactions and subscriptions, is rather a saving on money expended in public entertainments, or a tax on pleasure, than the amount of charitable contributions. But the fund of this charity is purely the effect of humanity, and good policy, without an auxiliary motive of any other kind

kind employed in aid of them. The Hoſpital, by judiciouſly blending together the ideas of amuſement and humanity, invites and engages many perſons to contribute to its maintenance, but at the ſame time it omits a numerous claſs of people, who having, neither leiſure, nor inclination for the entertainments it affords, are, on that account, the more likely to befriend this charity, which not only makes a full return in net value for what is contribued, by expending in acts of benevolence what is given from motives of benevolence, without pompous apparatus or ſuperfluous addition of any ſort, but even puts it in the power of the contributors inſtantly to perform a good deed, and enjoy the comfort of it, by leaving it to themſelves to chuſe and recommend the particular objects, who are to receive the benefit of their contributions.

The objects then of theſe charities and their means of ſupport being ſo different in many reſpects, it is plain, that there

there can be no real occaſion of jealouſy or rivalſhip between them,—In general they muſt have the ſame common friends. And in thoſe particular inſtances, where the one is without friends, there is a probability that the other will be ſucceſsful. The public therefore will look upon both with a favourable eye, ſince more good muſt be effected by both together, than either would produce ſeparately.

Now if this excellent charity be productive of much good even in a ſingle branch, where by the intervention of an Hoſpital it is exempted from the care of a conſiderable number of objects, what may be expected from it in the full extent of its beneficial influence and operations?

If the pains of Women in travail, and the diſeaſes they contract by miſmanagement in that perilous ſituation: If the peculiar miſery, which falls on the poor man's Children by the loſs of a tender

tender Mother, and the unutterable woe of the Father, who beholds them: If the ravages committed among the children of the poor, by that tyrant diſeaſe the ſmall-pox in its progreſs, and the lamentable tokens of malignancy which it leaves behind it:—If theſe be ſore afflictions; what ſalutary effects may be prognoſticated from a ſcheme ſo judiciouſly deſigned for their alleviation or prevention, that it preſcribes no bounds to the public compaſſion, nor limits its influence to any preciſe number of objects; but by leaving it to each Individual to enlarge the fund according to his pleaſure, and to direct the application of ſo much as he contributes, doth thereby lay open innumerable ſources of benevolence, and invite every humane and opulent perſon in the community, to intereſt himſelf immediately in the diſtreſſes of the poor, and take an active part in the glorious work of relieving them.

them (*d*); and while it thus gives the utmoſt ſcope to the public beneficence, it has this peculiar advantage, that no occaſional diminution of its fund, can hurt its credit, expoſe it to difficulties, or put a ſtop to its operations; becauſe what is paid in hand is the meaſure of its engagements, and therefore it can never be ſubject to any juſt demands, that it is not able to anſwer.

EXCLUSIVE of the general motives of humanity, and ſpecial conſiderations of diffuſive help, cheap terms, and certain performance, by which this charitable undertaking is recommended, it merits the public countenance, in that branch of it, which holds forth inoculation, for a political reaſon, that ought to have great weight in this kingdom. It is a known fact, that there are in IRELAND

(*d*) The induſtrious Poor are the ſupport of a community conſequently, every expedient that tends to the preſervation of their lives and healths is of general utility. This Charity is particularly ſubſervient to that end.

in proportion to the number of the people, more perſons who have been blinded by the Small-pox, than in any other nation in Europe: Good policy therefore will direct us to encourage a ſcheme, which has a manifeſt tendency, not only to ſecure to ſeveral of our poor brethren, one of the greateſt bleſſings which Heaven beſtows, but alſo to diſburden the community of the expence of maintaining them.

ANOTHER political advantage of the ſcheme, and which is no inconſiderable recommendation of it, is this, that it will furniſh the public with a regular opportunity of taking the exact number of the perſons inoculated, and conſequently with a ſtill more ſure and extenſive ground of conviction of the utility of inoculation.

THUS the fears and weakneſſes of Parents, and their miſ-apprehenſion of the ways of providence, which prove the

the greateſt obſtruction to this ſalutary practice, and are ſeldom ſubdued by any general reaſonings, will be ſucceſsfully oppoſed by plain matter of fact, and the force of experimental knowledge.

THE AUTHOR of theſe obſervations is very happy in finding that a charitable ſcheme in the city of London, from which the Plan of this was in a great Meaſure taken (*e*), is favoured with the moſt honourable patronage; and that the idea of its beneficial tendency is eſtabliſhed beyond a poſſibility of doubt (*f*). If that begun in DUBLIN ſhould not have a proportionable degree of ſucceſs, let its failure be aſcribed to any other cauſe than a want of charity in the people; for, whatever diſparity there is between the two countries in other reſpects,

(*e*) His Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales is Preſident, and his Excellency Simon, Earl Harcourt Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, is one of the Vice-Preſidents.

(*f*) In the ſpace of ſixteen years, more than 30600 women have been delivered.

reſpects, it may without vanity be aſſerted, that IRELAND, is not inferior to her ſiſter kingdom in the benevolent ſpirit, and generous diſpoſition of her inhabitants.

FINIS.